FEBRUARY 1976

Founded 1921 by R. Palme Dutt

LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF LEFT UNITY · 35p

Ray Buckton
Transport Policy

Vladimir Simonov
African Vietnam

Henry Clother
Education Campaign

Alan Brown
Tenth 5-Year Plan

George Anthony
Jobless Young Workers

A. Rothstein/Colonialism : P. Turner/IWY
R. Green/Cornwall : J. Peet/Red Baiting

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LABOUR MONTHLY

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VOL 58 No 2 FEBRUARY 1976

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REAL COLONIALISM AND COLONIALIST LIARS

'Keep clear of the poison of the press,
Let your grand old misleaders alone:
It will pay you for your pains
To educate your brains
And do a little thinking of your own.'
Social-Democratic Party Song Book, 1909.

'In an attempt somehow to justify in the eyes of African and world public opinion the irrefutable facts of subversive actions against the People's Republic of Angola, news services in Western countries are straining every effort to give a distorted view of current events in Angola. They distort the stand of the socialist countries and are trying to cast aspersions on the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.'
Pravda, January 3, 1976.

January 15, 1976

One need not go far to find examples of the aspersions. From the well-publicised abuse by the United States delegate at the United Nations—'a new European colonising, colonial, imperial nation' (*Times*, December 9)—and the tone-setting *Times* leading article of December 18—'a new colonial power, far stronger than the old and expelled western colonialists'—to the *Telegraph*'s repetition of Kissinger's charge of 'military expansionism' (December 27) and the cold-blooded falsehood put into President Ford's mouth and obediently taken up by Fleet Street, about 'three Russian warships off Africa' (*Telegraph*, January 8), the charges have been numerous. One cannot omit noticing the latest—the mendacious headline to a *Times* leading article on January 14: 'Russia's African Empire'. Such charges come well from a press which, up to the very last, supported the real colonialism of the British Empire—which, as its armed forces and officials withdrew, left hundreds of millions of Africans, Asians and Caribbeans in ghastly poverty, mass underfeeding, widespread hunger-diseases accentuated by lack of medical provision, great illiteracy and, underlying it all, the most primitive economic backwardness—after a century or more of rule under the Union Jack! The accusations come most convincingly, too, from a press doing its best to back-pedal on its original admissions that the United States from the beginning was financing and arming its jackals in Angola and in South Africa—a matter on which we are pleased to print a fuller analysis by a Soviet journalist in this number.

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Forgotten Testimony

Look a little more closely at the 'colonialism' and 'empire' of the Soviet Union, whose people after all did know what colonialism was, in the golden days of Tsar Nicholas II, beloved of Buckingham Palace and the Tory lick-spittles around it. Thirty years ago, in a book they and their reptile press would gladly forget—*Soviet Light on the Colonies*, by Leonard Barnes (Oxford man, once of the Colonial Office and seven years a settler in Africa)—the truth was told: that in place of conditions in 1914 very similar to those of India and Africa, the Soviet republics of central Asia on which Barnes's study was based were swiftly advancing towards 'complete political, economic and social equality among a population of nearly 200 millions' (it exceeds 250 millions now), 'comprising nearly 200 distinct ethnical groups in widely different phases of culture.' Amid a mass of brilliantly and logically presented opinion in dialogue form, which would make the book a shattering revelation for many a pundit even in the labour movement who still lectures the Soviet Union on its deficiencies, those facts are particularly relevant today which deal with the central Asian republics. Their reports have been flooding in during recent months, for the 25th Congress of the Soviet Union's Communist Party which meets in a few weeks' time.

The Tadjiks, Then and Now

Take for example Tadjikistan, the small mountain republic in the Pamirs, 'the roof of the world', with its 3,400,000 population—about the same as the African republics of Burundi, Dahomey or Somali, or as Jamaica and Trinidad taken together. The vast majority of the Tadjik people in 1914 were little better than serfs, working for the landowners with the most primitive tools, at their masters' mercy because all irrigation was under the latter's control, in constant debt to the landowners through failure to pay off their lion's share of the crop or advances for the 86 taxes which absorbed two-thirds of the peasant crops. There were no roads, no railways, no factories, only a few handicraft workshops. There was no education save for some Moslem priests' schools for boys, and no health provision: one hospital with forty beds and eleven local medical aid points, most of the people being treated when ill by some 20 'tabibs' (sorcerer-quacks), with the result that malaria, typhus, trachoma were rife, and the infant death rate was about 240 per thousand. Today, the Tadjik Republic has a flourishing, largely mechanised agriculture, run by 245 co-operative (collective) farms and 124 state farms. Its output of cotton—the main crop—was in 1974 twenty times that of

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1913, dairy produce nine or ten times as great, and fruit in profusion. Textiles and food processing come first in the factory industry developed since the revolution, with coal and metal mining, engineering and electric power, all expanding in modern plant. Moreover, all this production is in public or co-operative enterprise, part of a balanced and planned economy belonging to the Republic, while such Union-owned enterprises as exist in its territory contribute a proportion of their net profit to the Republic's budget—itself under the control of its own elected Supreme Soviet (325 deputies, of whom 111 are women). Instead of the 200 handicraft workers of 1914, there are well over 700,000 workers by hand and brain, nearly 100 per cent of them in trade unions. Instead of the 400 boy pupils of the mullahs in 1914, there were 900,000 boys and girls at school in 1974, with 38,000 students in technical colleges (none existed in 1914), nearly 50,000 in places of higher education (undreamed of in tsarist days), an Academy of Sciences with 48 research institutes under it, and 6,400 scientific specialists in the Republic's economy. They had no newspapers in 1914: they had 119 in 1974 with a circulation exceeding a million. The age-old poverty-diseases of tsarist (as of British, French, Belgian, Portuguese and other) colonialism have been stamped out—because the 40 hospital beds of 1914 were 32,500 sixty years later, and in place of the sorcerer-quacks of those days there are 20,000 fully-trained doctors now.

This was Deliberate Policy

The same broad picture would be seen if an unbiased eye looked at the larger nations of central Asia—the Uzbeks, Kirgizes, Turkmens, Kazakhs, between them totalling over 37 million people: or the other former subject peoples of the Caucasus, the northern seaboard or Siberia. For in all of them the Soviet state, the Soviet Communists, the 100-million-strong class of workers by hand and brain who have supported them ever since their grandfathers and grandmothers carried out the October revolution and won the civil war, have persistently applied—however big the difficulties and occasional errors might be—the policies laid down so often by Lenin and his colleagues even before the revolution. Those policies were to abolish all forms and channels of economic exploitation in the former colonies, root out all attempts to maintain the political privileges of the ruling Russian upper classes and their native chiefs and agents, afford the maximum material aid possible, as the general resources increased (but with a bigger proportion going to the poorest nationalities)—all in order to bring the former colonies in the shortest

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possible time abreast of the most advanced Soviet peoples in education, culture and science. This has been a consistent policy, and the new tenth five year plan, about which Alan Brown writes elsewhere in this journal, must give a further powerful impetus to this unprecedented development. Unprecedented—because if the *Times*, the *Telegraph* and similar newly-baked or lately converted defenders of the African peoples against 'colonialism' could point to a single British colony which was left in Asia or Africa by the British occupying forces and officials in anything like the present conditions of central Asia, they would be only too happy to do so. But they can't, because the Colonial Office reports of pre-1939 days, the *Stateman's Year-Book* of post-war years and the publications of the ex-colonies themselves would give them the lie.

Socialism Can't Be Colonialist

To imagine that a state which has had such successes in rooting out the last vestiges of colonial exploitation and colonialist thinking *within* its own borders would, or even could, engage in implanting some 'new colonialism', some new 'empire' in Africa, requires the degree of brazen impudence displayed regularly by Tory politicians and their favourite newspapers when British workers seek to improve their living or working conditions—or even demand that the Labour government elected by their votes should actually fulfil its election pledges. And so C. W. Beckett was quite right in advising the workers, in his day and ours (he must have written when the memories of Gladstone, the 'grand old misleader', were still fresh), to 'keep clear of the poison of the press.' And just as timely is the idea to 'do a little thinking of your own,' when the Soviet Union, explaining its policy of moral and material support for the patriotic forces of Angola in their struggle against American and South African colonialism, points out in the authoritative article quoted at the head of this editorial that 'such actions fully accord with the well-known decisions on decolonisation adopted by the United Nations as well as by the Organisation of African Unity.' Those decisions, by the way, the spokesmen of *capitalist* democracy did their damnedest to prevent, until the socialist/third world bloc proved too big for them to bully.

Seeks No Advantage, Stands Up Against Aggressors

It will be appropriate to close with yet another home truth set forth in the programme article of *Pravda*.

> The Soviet Union does not seek anything in Angola, either economic,

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military or any other advantage. Any assertions concerning the Soviet Union's alleged intention to establish military bases there, and about Soviet military expansion in Africa in general, are groundless. . . . The relaxation of international tension is far from signifying, and it cannot signify, freedom of action for aggressors, the maintenance of the colonialists' and racialists' opportunities to continue plundering the national wealth of the peoples, and, when the end of that is approaching, to try and regain by force their lost positions.

It is to the vital interest of the British people, and particularly of the working class movement now nearly 175 years old, to throw their weight on the side of the valiant liberation forces of Angola and their socialist allies.

Andrew Rothstein

LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

It was to the Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labour that, speaking as fraternal delegate from the Trades Union Congress, I made a plea for American support of international trade union unity. That plea was rejected by President Green in his declaration that the American Federation of Labour would only unite with labour movements

that rest on sound, fundamental principles of democracy and justice and righteousness and human liberty.

The same point was stressed in the Convention resolution. . . .

Now I want to say, with the same frankness and sincerity that my American friends showed to me, that all this talk about American 'democracy' is, in my humble opinion, complete humbug. 'Democracy'—in the land of the frame-up, the gunman and the spy? 'Democracy'—in the land of Rockefeller and Morgan, of Pinkerton and Baldwin-Felts? 'Democracy'—in the land where negro lynchings and the bludgeoning and murder of workmen striking for their rights have been a part of everyday life these many years? 'Democracy' —in the land where all the forces of the law, the state and the police—the whole machinery of government, legal and illegal—are openly and shamelessly at the beck and call of triumphant plutocracy in order to perpetuate the capitalist system and the exploitation of the working people?

(From 'Capital and Labour in the USA' by A. A. Purcell MP, *Labour Monthly*, February 1926)

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AFRICAN VIETNAM

Vladimir Simonov*

IN Irving Wallace's novel, *The Man*, a hit of about ten years ago, there is an episode which till now preserves its ominous topicality: the US president is sitting deep in thought in front of an inconspicuous grey telephone, a direct line to the Pentagon. All of a sudden his face lights up: a crucial decision has been taken. He picks up the phone, and in a few hours a couple of US crack divisions are dropped at the airfields of a certain African country, Baraza. The US force prevents an uprising of the pro-communist population of Baraza against the local ruler who, naturally, admires the Western ideals of democracy, and speaks with a well-cultivated Harvard accent.

Irving Wallace conjured up Baraza, but took the rest of his story from real life. At that time the United States was already rapidly sinking into the morass of the Vietnamese venture, having no idea how difficult it would be to get out. Washington took it for granted that it was the privilege of the strong to dictate to peoples their choice of society and to determine their future. Rather, that was the sacred duty of a country which had taken upon itself the right of a great power to rule the world.

It took several years and tens of thousands of zinc coffins airlifted from Vietnam to make Washington understand that military intervention was a weak argument in the battle with the ideas of socialism and national liberation spreading among the masses in the developing countries.

Apparently those ideas have affected the atmosphere on Capitol Hill. In December, the US Senate voted against the further use of the military budget to finance secret US intelligence operations in Angola. One can hardly say that the legislators' reaction was timely. The CIA interference in Angola, which smacks of early Vietnam, had already cost the US at least 26 million dollars. Another 7 million were 'on the way', and even the report of the House Intelligence Sub-committee, which 'leaked' those figures, will be unable to check that particular spending. The decision of the Senate only temporarily saved another 28 million dollars which had already been earmarked for the purpose in the Pentagon's budget under the innocent item 'transportation expenses'.

The report has not yet been made public, but the sum total of 60

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million dollars cited by it as the CIA's entire spending in Angola up to date has already been put in doubt. Senator John Tunney, for instance, believes that through Angola's ill-disposed neighbours in Africa and by financial machinations the CIA has squandered far more there than Congress controllers have managed to trace. And if not, everything is in the offing, assures Senator Hubert Humphrey. He thinks that this is only a beginning, and that in 1976 intelligence chiefs will ask for 150 million dollars.

The beginning of US involvement in Vietnam was a replica of the present situation. Perhaps it was more modest in terms of money spent, but the US legislature and world public opinion were deceived in the same way. Eight-digit figures are not the most appalling thing about the CIA scheme in Angola. Fragmentary information from the committee's report makes up a sinister picture of the dissent fostered in the Angolan national liberation movement. Supplying weapons and millions of dollars 'for pocket money' to the African twin brother of Thieu, Washington is again trying to reverse political processes which are taking place 7,000 miles away from the US borders.

History is repeating itself down to the smallest details. Newsman Seymour Hersh won the Pulitzer prize for unravelling the bloody Vietnam tragedy of My Lai. Today Hersh has managed to obtain information about a sitting of 'Committee 40' in January 1975, when this US government body supervising intelligence operations abroad gave its OK to advancing new pawns in the power game in Angola. The central one was Holden Roberto, the present head of the disruptionist grouping, 'FNLA'.

Roberto's life story as told by Hersh gives a clear idea of the process of building up native puppets who later demand an airborne party to save the 'democracy' they allegedly embody. Since 1961 he had been a rank-and-file mercenary agent, according to Hersh, who socked the CIA for 10,000 dollars a year for 'collecting intelligence information'. By decision of 'Committee 40' he was given 300,000 dollars, and was overnight promoted to the rank of a fighter for the liberation of Angola. 'The money has considerably buttressed his stand,' admitted an official witness of the metamorphosis, in a talk with Hersh. 'For nearly ten years he was sitting in Kinshasa. Then all of a sudden this great aid—so he begins to move.'

After that one could only feel sorry for American propagandists who had to assert that this man had as much right to represent the people's interests as the legitimate government of the People's Republic of Angola. The international community has not taken this

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crude bait. The People's Republic of Angola is recognised by more than 30 countries, whereas the self-styled FNLA-UNITA 'cabinet' is recognised by no one.

Washington appears to be planning to use its stooges to obtain resources for the re-colonisation of Angola from the treasury . . . of Angola itself. On December 22, the US Gulf Oil Corporation announced that it had frozen the rent due to the Angolan government for the exploitation of oilfields in the area of Cabinda. This enclave, controlled by MPLA forces, is believed to be the third biggest oil-producing area south of the Sahara. Since 1968, 120 oil rigs of Gulf Oil have been pumping out 150,000 barrels of oil a day from the continental shelf of Cabinda.

On December 31, the Corporation was due to put 95 million dollars to the account of the People's Republic of Angola—but thought it better to keep the money. The UPI News Agency pointed out that the decision was taken under direct pressure from the US State Department. This gross economic subversion against the newly-free African state once again reminds everyone that Washington's African policy is formulated in the headquarters of the North American monopolies.

Against this background the babble sounds all the more theatrical about 'the international duty of a great power', with which the CIA could perhaps have coped brilliantly if it had not been for the interference of the Senate. The decision of the legislators to discontinue the financing of secret operations in Angola was declared 'the greatest tragedy', which allegedly would gravely damage the international stature of the United States in future.

We are witnessing a rare occasion when an old tune sends no one to sleep. The same dubious concern about United States international prestige was used to squeeze out ever new allocations for military supplies to the anti-popular regimes in Saigon and Phnom Penh. US policy in Angola will undoubtedly greatly influence its international prestige, but in a very different way. The greatest tragedy? Perhaps that is so if we look at it from the point of view of the complete parallelism of the foreign policy lines in Angola of the United States and the South African Republic. The *New York Times* sums up this alarming equation by pointing out that the US are in fact shoulder to shoulder with soldiers of the country which throughout the world is regarded as a symbol of racialism.

Washington has been stubbornly denying the charge that US interference in Angola is beginning to look like a mirror reflection of the Vietnam venture. They say that parallels are out of place in this

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case, if only because the US 'has no permanent interests in Angola' and even 'no objection to the MPLA'.

But facts make it impossible to take those statements at their face value. Washington obviously has been trying to use all available resources to strangle the legitimate Angolan government both militarily and economically.

Angola is not an imaginary Baraza copied by Irving Wallace from a very real Vietnam. Attempts to cast the US once more in the role of global policeman only testify to a failure to benefit by the Vietnamese lesson.

SOCIALIST TRANSPORT POLICY NEEDED

Ray Buckton*
General Secretary
Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen

SO often is that hackneyed phrase 'a year of decision' used that one is hesitant to utter those words. Yet it has to be said, because during 1976 the Minister for Transport will issue a document, the form of which has yet to be decided, which will set out his or the Department's thinking on transport. What is at stake is not only the future of British Railways or the transport systems of this country but the quality of life for present and future generations.

Following the second world war, we had for the first time a Labour government with the power to introduce socialist policies. To its credit a bill was steered through parliament which became the 1947 Transport Act, bringing into being the British Transport Commission under whose umbrella was embraced the essential forms of public transport, a springboard for the worth-while goal of a socialist, integrated, co-ordinated transport system.

During the intervening years the ideals of our predecessors have been discarded; powerful lobbies formed whose objectives could not in any sense be described as altruistic. Profit not service to the community became the determining factor, so the government of the day fomented a state of hypochondria in the railway industry and then engaged Doctor Beeching to cure its imaginary ills—a competent surgeon, as our rural communities would vouch. The amputees were promised and given alternative forms of public

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transport but the relationship soon soured when the authorities found that a bus service was unable to pay its way. It was not long before the alternative services were withdrawn on the pretext that they were not required, and many people in rural and urban areas were forced to purchase their own means of transport or remain in isolation.

Now there is talk of further operations, and if the patient should again be sacrificed on the altar of profit it would be in keeping with the capitalist policy of setting aside long-term interests for short-term gains.

Because all of us in the railway industry know what is afoot, despite strenuous government denials, the three railway trade unions mounted a campaign against cut-backs in the railway service. During mid-December the campaign was launched with a mass meeting at Central Hall, Westminster, followed by a national lobby of parliament, and the response from all sections of the community has been heartening, a clear indication that the people of this country do not wish to be deprived of public transport, inadequate as it is. I use the words 'public transport' deliberately because this is not a campaign to keep railway workers in employment. It is a crusade to ensure that the men and women of this country will be able to travel for recreation, work and business when they wish or need to do so.

There is a myth, fostered by certain sections of the capitalist press, that rail subsidies benefit the better-off, and those in the higher income groups are the principal rail users. Facts show that 50 per cent of all households have no cars, and some members of nearly all families are dependent upon public facilities. It is the 'better-off' travellers who are more likely to travel first class, yet it is interesting to see that of a total of 732 million passenger journeys only 15 million are first class. Nevertheless, if there is a deliberate pricing policy to increase fares to the extent that public transport becomes a luxury then you would achieve a situation where only the rich could afford to travel.

The Labour Party's election manifesto of October 1974 said that the energy crisis had underlined the Party's objectives to move as much traffic as possible from road to rail and to water, and to develop public transport so that there is less dependence upon the private car. The manifesto also promised that measures would be introduced to co-ordinate and integrate the transport services, improve public transport, especially in rural areas, to extend public ownership of road haulage and expand the system of free and con-

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cessionary fares for old people, the blind and disabled. This was followed by a resolution passed without dissent at the Labour Party Conference in October 1975 which said that railways and nationalised road transport, together with water-borne transport, have a vital role to play in the provision of an efficient public transport system. The government was called upon to boost investment in the railways and other publicly owned transport to enable much-needed modernisation and electrification to take place. The resolution also included the words: 'Conference believes that a reliable system of public transport is not only an essential social service but also a necessary precondition for economic recovery.' Fine words and admirable sentiments and a clear statement of policy, yet public transport is now being threatened with massive cut-backs.

For too long, governments have used the nationalised industries to manipulate their fiscal policies, but these industries were taken over by the state in order to benefit the community and to provide a service that was not possible under private enterprise.

Those who benefit most from a deteriorating public transport system are those who profit from increased car usage. The oil and car monopolies are multinational companies and the biggest corporations in the world. If the policy to invest less and less in public transport is not halted and reversed, more and more people will be forced to devote a higher proportion of a declining income to provide private transport. The end product will be even greater dependence upon the giant oil and car corporations which will increase their massive economic strength which they use to influence the policies of governments in the western world.

The world is faced with an energy crisis, and unless immediate steps are taken we will become more and more dependent upon the whims of the oil sheikhs. Much faith is being placed in North Sea oil to solve our economic problems but it will not provide the panacea our government is so earnestly seeking. Would it not be better to use that natural resource for such vital necessities as petro-chemicals and plastics and to turn to an indigenous source of fuel for transport needs by converting coal into electricity? Electricity is a source of energy which can be utilised in many ways, so the government should approve and invest in a long-term railway electrification programme for the most effective revitalisation of rail services. Other nations have followed this policy with much success and we should do likewise.

Energy conservation must be a principal aim. Short- and long-term planning is vital to enable alternative forms of energy to be developed.

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Transport as a prime user of energy is a key factor, and an integrated, co-ordinated transport system, within which greater emphasis must be given to the transport of goods by rail, must be brought into being with a minimum of delay.

A national transport plan is vital to the community and the economic well-being of the country. We must safeguard the standard of life of our people by curtailing atmospheric pollution and noise. The railways are able to confer upon the community undoubted social and environmental benefits by taking heavy freight traffic off the roads. With adequate investment some 200 million tons of freight traffic could be transferred to rail: one loaded 700-ton freight train can replace 40-50 lorries and move their loads with a quarter of the fuel. Such a system does not mean the elimination of the private car, because it will have its part to play: one method supplements the other.

Transport supplies the arteries through which the life-blood of our industries moves, so it is economic sense to retain the present network and services for when the upturn in our economy comes. Let us therefore do all we can to ensure that the Labour government honours the pledges set out in its manifesto. By that means we will move towards the socialist society which the vast majority of workers in this country so earnestly desire.

TENTH FIVE YEAR PLAN

Alan Brown

READING the draft of the new Soviet five year plan—particularly amid Britain's unemployment and falling general living standards—is a salutary experience, concentrating the mind on some important points. It illustrates the superiority of the socialist system as a means of satisfying the fundamental human need for security, of ensuring rising living and cultural standards, of avoiding such evils as inflation and currency destruction—and it shows that the involvement of people in socialism's truly open society makes for the most advanced type of democracy.

In December, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union took three decisions concerning 'The Main Directions in the Economic Development of the USSR for 1976-80'—the draft of the tenth five year plan. It approved the draft, decided to publish it, and submitted it for discussion 'in Party organisations, at meetings of the working people and in the press'. In some 28,000

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words, the draft lays down the planned direction, given peace, of one of the world's largest countries, over the coming five years. Describing in some detail how the total resources of the USSR are to be developed, it spotlights a whole system in motion, with inter-linked advances in industry, agriculture, social life, education, medicine, recreation, science and other spheres. As these lines are written, millions of Soviet citizens will be meeting together to discuss their attitudes and approach to the draft plan's intricate forward projections and overall approach—thus providing the essential 'feedback' to the planners: and their views are filling columns in Soviet newspapers. Discussion will go on throughout the five years, for Soviet plans are not rigid, bureaucratic edifices, unalterable by discussion or changed circumstance. Reading the carefully prepared projections, each dovetailing into the other, one sees the essence of the plan as a living, breathing, social entity, in which every Soviet citizen has a part to play.

Though over the years one becomes accustomed to both the idea and the reality of the plans, familiarity should not lead us to overlook the simple fact that here is a vast country putting every step and stage of its proposed future development on the counter, so that the whole people have the opportunity of being involved in decisions which will touch every part of their lives. Such openness is only possible under socialism, in a society in which decisions are not taken behind closed doors by a small ruling clique of monopolists and their like (both home-bred and foreign), where men and women cannot awake one morning to find that a gentleman from Detroit is blackmailing their government for massive hand-outs to support an American multinational company. And this aspect of socialist planning exposes the charlatan pose which presents Western, media-led mass confusion as a superior way of informing people. On December 1, for example, the British press carried advertisements from the government headlined: 'Knowing the cause of inflation isn't important. Stopping inflation is.' Thus does our state cultivate ignorance as a matter of policy: do not question how your society is run, how it debases your pay; do not concern yourselves with the parasites, the multinational companies and others, who are bleeding your country, nor with the idiot politicians whose policies will make inflation worse—just accept government-ordained cuts in your standard of life, and keep quiet. A contrast between two countries, two systems.

Another contrast is the straightforward one of expectations. On the one side the British worker sees his standard of life falling—a fall

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confirmed, if under-estimated, by the Central Statistical Office ('Further fall recorded in standards of living,' said the *Times* headline of January 10, 1976, tucked away on page 17!)—and has doubts and fears for his actual continued employment; on the other side the Soviet worker sees a clear guarantee of all-round rising standards: higher pay, stable or lowering state prices, more and better goods, housing and education, higher pensions and other benefits, all with the added guarantee of secure employment.

All friends of and fighters for the Soviet Union can celebrate two facts: that the greatest (ninth) plan in the history of the USSR has been successfully completed (the Central Committee resolution outlines its criticisms), and that a significant new plan has been launched with the following key-note sentence:

> The main task of the tenth five year plan is the consistent implementation of the policy of the Communist Party aimed at improving the people's material and cultural standards of life, based on the dynamic and proportional progress of social production and enhancing its effectiveness, on the acceleration of scientific and technological progress, on labour productivity growth and a great improvement in work quality throughout the entire national economy.

The main proposals include a growth of 35-39 per cent in industrial output (means of production 38-42 per cent and consumer goods 31-33 per cent); the average annual output of farm products is to rise by 14-17 per cent over the previous five years; the vehicle industry is to increase its output to over 2 million vehicles in 1980, including 800,000 lorries; also in that year 600,000 tractors and 125,000 combine harvesters will be produced; 2,800 kms of extra railway tracks are to be built in the busier directions of the network, 2,500 kms are to be electrified and 3,000 kms of new railways put into operation; all other forms of transport are to be increased (sea, river, pipeline, road and air), including 5,300 kms of new sea moorages, 15,000 kms of oil pipeline and 3,500 kms of petro-product lines; computer production is to rise by 80 per cent; work is going ahead on the single countrywide grid for the electricity system, as also for a single automated gas supply to cover the USSR's 8.6 million square miles of territory.

To safeguard the future, massive amounts of capital are to be invested in education. New general educational schools for at least 7 million pupils are to be built (including 4.5 million in rural areas, emphasising a recurring theme in the plan of narrowing the differences between urban and rural standards), the enrolment at secondary vocational and technical schools is to be doubled; about 11 million

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qualified workers are to be trained, vocational schools are to be opened for 1.1 million pupils, and 9.6 million specialists with a higher and specialised secondary education are to be trained. The hospital service is to be expanded, and nearly 14 million flats built. To increase the power behind the elbow and brain of the Soviet worker, great increases are planned in the coal-mining, oil, electricity, iron and steel, chemical and allied industries.

One hardly has to draw the contrast here between the two systems, with the current attempt at mass sackings in the steel industry, the leaked reports of further cuts in the railway system (following the vandalism carried on in recent decades in both the railways and coal) and the preparation of further cuts in government social spending. Again, two aspects: first, the contrast between those who are building and those who are destroying; second, between the democracy of involving every able-bodied person in directing their lives to their best advantage, and the situation in Britain where the working people are forced to fight rearguard actions against schemes cooked up behind locked doors.

A few words on agriculture, where the Soviet harvest difficulties were seized on by our press and TV as the convenient provocation to occupy space and time which might otherwise have dealt with the five year plan. The 'hopelessly bad' weather, as Nikolai Baibakov, Soviet planning chief, described it, harmed the Soviet harvest (the press played down the equally disastrous effects it had in the West of Europe). But what have been the Soviet achievements in the field of grain production, about which there has been so much noise? In the five years preceding the first world war, under the tsarist regime, an annual average of 72.5 million tons was produced (and much exported, at a terrible price to the peasants who also needed grain to live). During the first five years after the second world war devastation, the annual average was 64.8 million tons. The following figures bring the story up to date:

Average Annual Grain Output (million tons)	
1951-55	88.5
1956-60	121.5
1961-65	130.5
1966-70	161.6
1971-75	181.0

And, those who chose to compare Soviet and American yields should bear in mind that about two-thirds of Soviet land fit for cultivation is subject to periodic drought, and 'a mere 1.1 per cent

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of the arable land in the Soviet Union has an annual precipitation rate of 700 mm, while the United States total is almost 60 per cent. Only 15 per cent of the Soviet arable land lies in the zone of prolonged frost-free vegetative season (170 days or more), while the United States has 70 per cent of its arable land in this zone' (*Soviet Economy Forges Ahead*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973).

However, to return to the plan, the intention is to invest huge sums into the 'all-out development of agriculture, including production, housing and communal building and machinery'.

Section VIII of the plan deals in detail with 'The Programme for Social Development and Improving People's Living Standards'. Wages of workers and employees are to increase by 16-18 per cent (collective farmers' incomes from socialised production by 24-27 per cent), alongside a rise of 28-30 per cent in payments and benefits from the social consumption fund. The plan is

> to continue ensuring stable state retail prices on basic foodstuffs and non-foodstuffs goods; to reduce prices on individual goods as necessary conditions are created and resources accumulate.

In this section, as in others, the accent is very much on raising quality, increasing variety, better satisfying the demands of all age-groups, and more sophistication in production. More than any previous plan the new one stresses quality in all its forms, and this will clearly take a considerable proportion of the investment which in previous plans it was felt more essential to put into sheer numerical production.

The British press and other media have tried hard to play down the plan (if not ignoring it totally). Professor Alec Nove, whose piece was tucked away in the business section of the *Times* of January 5 ('Modest targets in Russia's five year plan') poured as much cold water as he could manage on to it, but had to begin his summary paragraph thus:

> Yet a sense of proportion requires us to remember that our own economy is in a state of acute disarray, that unemployment and instability cause major inefficiencies, and that the Soviet system faces not absolute decline (except in harvest yields in a bad-weather year) but a slow-down in growth. . . .

So, while the task of the 'Sovietologists' gets increasingly difficult, it is as well for us to remember finally what the Soviet plan is *not*. It is not a collection of 'election promises' such as we are accustomed to—it contains no promises at all, and is simply a statement of what

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the Soviet Communist Party believes can be achieved by the total united commitment of the Soviet people during the coming five years. Nor is it a plan with any room for parasites, but one in which the writer has a place next to the miner, the railwayman as much as the composer or scientist, the farmer alongside the poet. None shall carry the other, but all shall carry each. As parasitism eats away at our vitals, gnaws at the nourishment we need in Britain for our and our children's future, and as bourgeois economists and politicians continue to look up the same blind alley for its non-existent solution to our problems, the path of Soviet planning stands as the pointer to the only *real* alternative: socialist ownership and control of production, distribution and exchange, with planning based on the socialist democratic dissemination of the facts to the people.

RED BAITING IN BONN

John Peet

A FEW weeks ago Rudi Roeder, a rail locomotive driver of Würzburg, Federal Republic of Germany, was dismissed from his job by his employers, Federal Railways. The sole reason for his dismissal was that he is an active member of the German Communist Party, a party which is perfectly legal in the FRG, a party which contests elections at all levels and publishes a daily newspaper.

Herr Roeder was one of the latest victims of Bonn's 'Anti-Radical Decree', promulgated in 1972. The stated aim of the decree was to ensure that 'radicals of the left and the right' believed to be hostile to the Constitution of the Federal Republic should not penetrate the public services and subvert the state.

In the past three years, a total of over half-a-million public servants have been 'investigated' by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, West Germany's political police. The comb-out has covered not simply higher government officials with possible access to state secrets; it has ranged far and wide in the ranks of postmen, railwaymen, teachers and law officials.

So far, according to official figures, just over 300 men and women have lost their employment as a result of the job ban; there is no way of estimating how many young people have refrained from applying for public service posts because they have no desire for the Bonn political police to start investigating their party affiliations today, or their political activities in the past. Another natural result of the ban, and its serious economic consequences for those affected, is that

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quite a number of students are today reluctant to indulge in open left-wing political activities, since in a number of recent cases people have been sacked because of 'political indiscretions', such as standing as a progressive candidate in student elections seven or eight years ago. Amnesty International recently reported that fewer and fewer public servants are ready to sign appeals for the release of political prisoners in Chile or elsewhere, fearing that such signature might be held against them.

Foreign observers are sometimes puzzled as to why the 'Anti-Radical Decree' was promulgated by the present Social-Democratic/Free-Democratic coalition government in Bonn, which is in general more liberal than any previous post-second world war West German government. The answer would appear to lie in the obvious wish of the Social Democrats to demonstrate publicly that they are not really 'red' in any way. The coalition is under constant fire from the Christian Democratic opposition for being 'soft on the reds'—concluding treaties with the socialist states of Europe, recognising the German Democratic Republic, and so on. The right wing of the Christian Democrats goes further, and tries to identify Social Democrats in the public eye with 'long-haired student layabouts', 'trade unionists sabotaging the economy', and all the other bogy figures of the right.

To ensure a clear distinction between themselves and such 'anti-constitutional forces', the Social Democrats sponsored the job ban decree.

But, as so often in the past, social democratic capitulation to the right wing soon brought sorrow to the Social Democrats. Nearly all the early job ban cases concerned young people who were members of, or associated with, the Communist Party, together with a scattering of ultra-leftists. But recently, particularly in those West German provinces governed by the Christian Democrats, young Social Democrats have been sacked too.

One particularly striking recent case was that of Charlotte Niess, aged 28. After university she had worked for the requisite number of years in the state prosecutor's office, taken her higher civil service examinations, and was appointed to the post of junior judge in Nuremberg. Just before taking up the post, she received an official letter from the Bavarian Ministry of Justice: her appointment had been cancelled because of her membership in 'an anti-constitutional Communist auxiliary organisation'.

Fräulein Niess has never belonged to any political party except the Social Democrats; but she is also a member of a professional

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organisation, the Association of Democratic Jurists. This is a left-of-centre body, with a membership of some 500 lawyers, judges and law professors, including the legal adviser of the West German TUC, and the presiding judge of the Frankfurt Upper Court. According to the West German political police, six members of the 23-man executive committee are Communists, nine are Social Democrats and the others have no party affiliation.

The state of mind of the witch-hunters in the Bavarian Ministry of Justice is best shown by a passage from the official document of dismissal presented to Fräulein Niess. After noting that the West German Association of Democratic Jurists is affiliated to the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, this document states:

> It is irrelevant that the International Association of Democratic Lawyers has consultative status with the United Nations and UNESCO, for both the UN and UNESCO have member states which are under totalitarian rule. . . .

The case of Fräulein Niess, who at the age of 28 finds herself with ten years of training for a profession she is not allowed to pursue, has alarmed many members of the Social Democratic Party and many trade unionists who paid no heed when only Communists were falling under the job ban. They note that she is not charged with any specific 'anti-constitutional activity', but solely with membership of a perfectly legal organisation which has a considerable Communist membership. This form of guilt by association could obviously be used to blacken the names of trade union officials who naturally associate with Communists in their organisations. Establishment-minded Social Democrats have also seen the danger. Rudolf Schöfberger, Social Democratic Chairman in Munich, stated that the Niess case 'is a blow at the heart of our Party'; and Wolfgang Roth, a more left-wing member of the Party executive, commented: 'The first steps have now been taken towards thought control.'

Faced with this situation, the Social Democratic leadership attempted to take some very small steps to rectify affairs. They introduced a bill into parliament in October 1975 which retained the main features of the 'Anti-Radical Decree' but introduced a few safeguards; suspect public servants would be allowed to bring a lawyer with them when they were interrogated, and 'youthful indiscretions' in student days should not by themselves be sufficient to bring the sack. The bill was passed by the Lower House, the Bundestag, but rejected by the Upper House of the Bonn parliament, in which the Christian Democrats hold the majority; the Christian Democrats claimed that the job ban needed to be made tougher, not softer. And here, for

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the moment, the situation rests, with the 'Anti-Radical Decree' still being applied, but the bill postponed for an indefinite period.

There is one interesting and very significant footnote: supporters of the job ban ruling always emphasise that it is directed both against the left and against the extreme right, the neo-nazis. Curiously enough, there is no record to date of a single neo-nazi being sacked under the decree, though a significant proportion of the executive of the neo-nazi National Democratic Party is composed of government servants—teachers, customs officers, and at least two lieutenant colonels on the Bundeswehr active list.

UNEMPLOYMENT — THE FUTURE FOR YOUTH?

George Anthony
President
London (North) District, Engineering Section
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers

WAL HANNINGTON's *The Problem of the Distressed Areas*, written in 1937, bears fair comparison with two recent articles, in the *Sunday Times* of December 7 and the *Observer* of December 21. All three studies draw attention to the unemployment of the day and the methods by which the establishment tries to deal with its eternal sickness.

In the 1930s J. M. Keynes held that the unemployed could usefully be occupied in the digging of holes and filling them in. In 1975 the youth of Sunderland, under the care of a £30 million-backed Job Creation Programme, cleared the beaches of driftwood and seaweed. No doubt Mr Dewi Rees, formerly a marketing director of Whitbreads, who heads it is doing his best, but clearly he has not yet got past this Keynesian blind alley. The government mandate to the JCP is 'to check the rise in unemployment': if such is the product of government thinking in these relatively early days of mass unemployment, the prospects for young people, particularly those with no skills, are alarming. For in May 1929, when the Ministry of Labour opened 'instructional centres', these were in fact residential camps.

> The nature of the work done in these camps consists mainly of forest clearing, road-making, drainage, timbering, excavating, quarrying and levelling. In some of the camps a certain amount of indoor work is done in

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> rough carpentry, boot repairing, elementary metal work and ordinary educational subjects. (*The Problem of the Distressed Areas*)

At the Small Heath (Birmingham) Department of Employment, teenagers have recently discovered the disadvantages of being without prospects. Two of them working at £25 per week in a slaughterhouse were sacked. They found that the only other jobs available paid a rate of £14 per week.

For jobs with skill attached, the engineering industry training board estimated 15,303 craft trainees in 1973-74; by comparison, 1966-67 showed a figure of 35,512, a drop over seven years of 20,209. The craft trainees given day or block release fell from 101,410 to 66,727 over the same period. For girls, the figures for craft training are a scandal. In 1973, of 107,000 who began employment only 5,000 were apprenticed, and half of these (2,350) entered hairdressing where the training is secondary to the use of cheap labour.

The national total for youth unemployment shows a grim figure growing worse. The October Department of Employment releases showed that the number of 65,292 school leavers without work was 12 times higher than the 5,140 of October 1973. The south-east figures show a handful of 794 in October 1973 compared with 5,096 in October 1975.

The Greater London Council in a statement to Eric Varley released on October 17 declared that 489,000 jobs in manufacturing industry have been lost in London since 1961. The hardest hit areas were Stepney, Poplar, Brixton and Canning Town, where the percentages unemployed were, respectively, 10.2, 10.0, 7.5 and 7.1. If one looks at the figures for June 1975 school leavers in Newham, which covers Canning Town, at December 18 there were 321 young people signing on, 221 having experienced only one job and 100 never having worked since leaving school. This is just over 10 per cent of the 3,000 school leavers.

In order to draw some conclusion from these 'damned statistics', one has to look at the total picture of the one-and-a-quarter million unemployed. One gets no comfort from the Minister of Employment's recent 'I am appalled by these figures' statement. Readers of this journal need to go a little further than mere concern, however sincerely expressed.

The decline of modern world capitalism, and the British variety in particular, is far deeper than that of 1937. In any event, the jobless figures then were in decline because, of *inter alia*, the growth of the munitions industry prior to the second world war.

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Although the government employs economists by the hundred to search for answers, the crisis continues unabated. In 1926, a year of similarly rising unemployment, shipbuilding suffered a drop of 42 per cent in employment; rationalisation in the iron and steel industry produced mass unemployment for the workers there; the enforced introduction of the eight-hour from the seven-hour day in mining made 100,000 redundant. For 1976, the shipbuilding and ship-repair employers pray for blessed nationalisation to save them from extinction. The car industry has its begging bowl permanently held out, and the British Steel Corporation attempts a £170 million cut in its wages bill. In spite of a recent recovery, because cheap oil has dried up, mining has suffered a general decline.

This, however, is the era of the UCS and other work-ins, the demise of the Industrial Relations Act and the release of the Pentonville Five. Such actions cannot fail to give confidence to, and permit lessons to be drawn by, trade unionists that the employers and government do not have the last word in deciding the future.

Already there has been the magnificent march and lobby on November 26, 1975, which the *Times* of the following day described as having 'clearly shaken' the General Council leadership. They and Len Murray worked hard to scuttle the London No 8 Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions' hosting of the North West Regional Council of the TUC's call to demonstrate opposition to the growing loss of jobs. The January 24 meeting of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions was called on the issue of support for the TUC's ten-part plan to cut unemployment. In addition the No 8 Confed in conjunction with the London Co-op Political Committee is to follow up the initiative of the November 26 march with a call for a national conference on unemployment on March 27 in the Central Hall, Westminster.

The 1976 TUC conference could well see the adoption of a declaration similar to the motion eventually withdrawn by the engineers at Brighton in 1974 in the interests of a doubtful unity. In contrast to the General Council's policy of that year, the eight-point resolution of AUEW-TASS stands the test of relevance to the present-day dilemma. For instance, it called for 'a large scale redistribution of income and wealth . . . a wide-ranging and permanent system of price control . . . substantial cuts in defence expenditure'.

If this can become the order of the day, Labour can be turned from its increasingly right-wing policies, back to the election manifesto of 1974, providing a real alternative to the policy of unemployment as a cure for inflation and industrial decline.

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THE GENERAL STRIKE OF 1842

Early in the 'hungry forties' working class organisation and struggle reached a peak which culminated in a general or, perhaps more correctly, a partial general strike.

Wages in the textile mills reached such a low level that the workers could not accept less and live. When a further cut was announced in Stalybridge, there was an immediate reaction. The workers went on strike and marched from mill to mill and mine and factory pulling out the boiler plugs to ensure that all work ceased. The strike spread to Lancashire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire, the Potteries, Warwickshire, South Wales, Tyneside and Scotland in what the Home Secretary, Sir James Graham called 'the mad insurrection of the working classes'.

The skilled workers organised in trade unions played a significant part in directing the strike. In a series of conferences the issues were debated, and on August 15 and 16, at a conference held at the Carpenters' Hall in Manchester where Alexander Hutchinson, Secretary of the Friendly United Smiths of Great Britain and Ireland, took the chair, rank and file Chartists won the rest of the trades delegates to their point of view. Fifty-eight out of the eighty-five delegates voted to remain on strike until the People's Charter became the law of the land. What had begun as an economic strike became a political issue.

The Chartist leadership was, however, indecisive. On the anniversary of Peterloo, August 16, they met in Manchester to unveil a monument to Henry Hunt. They found themselves in the centre of the strike. Peter Murray McDouall from Ashton-under-Lyne and Thomas Cooper of the Potteries proposed a resolution pledging the conference to support the strike. A manifesto was issued calling on all to 'rally round our sacred cause, and leave the decision to the God of Justice and of Battle.' Unanimity was not reached, and no steps were taken to organise the Chartists in support of the strike.

The government was not slow to recognise the dangers of the situation. They drafted large military forces into Manchester. The railwaymen were not yet organised, so that the rapidly growing railway system was used to transport troops from Ireland via Liverpool as well as from garrisons in the south of England. Two thousand soldiers and six pieces of artillery were concentrated in Manchester. Sir James Graham said: 'Gentlemen and mill-owners . . . may arm their servants and retainers, may patrol on horseback, and command the strong arm of the law, which is on their side.'

Without decisive leadership, the strike lost momentum. By August 20 a drift back to work had begun. The government then removed the velvet glove from the mailed first. Fifteen hundred Chartists were arrested and many imprisoned or deported. With the leaders in prison, Chartist organisation suffered a severe set-back. Unity between the political and economic aims of the workers which had been gained in the struggle was, for a time, dissipated.

Edmund and Ruth Frow

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The *Illustrated London News*, reporting from Preston during the general strike of 1842, included the following in its columns, in print smaller than this: 'The public functionaries . . . met the mob. . . . The Riot Act was then read' (August 20, 1842); 'The resumption of work is by no means general, in many cases the men still demanding the wages they had two years ago' (August 27, 1842). The captions under the Preston pictures are more typical of the *ILN*'s anti-working class bias.

A report from Stafford, datelined August 21, read: 'Straggling parties have been passing through . . . for the last two or three nights . . . their general direction being for the south, where the colliers are nearly all out. Lord Talbot's men at the Preston mines have been sworn in as special constables; but how far this will secure them from the influence of the mob movement . . . it is difficult to say' (*ILN*, August 27, 1842).

'PRESTO

'STAFFORDSHIRE COLLIERS'

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TACK ON THE MILITARY—TWO RIOTERS SHOT' (*ILN*, August 20, 1842)

ENE OF THE LATE RIOTS AT PRESTON' (*ILN*, August 27, 1842)

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DEVELOPING CAMPAIGN ON EDUCATION CUTS

Henry Clother*

NATIONAL and local aspects of the growing campaign against cuts in educational spending have been covered in *Labour Monthly* last year by John Tarver in April, Reg Bird in August and Mick Luker in December. These articles described how £463 million had already been cut from the education budget since the 'Barber cuts' of 1973, and revealed that contingency plans had been prepared by the Department of Education and Science for further cuts of £520 million over the next four years. This article is concerned with the development and organisation of a national campaign against the cuts in 1976 which will incorporate the lessons of 1975 and which will match the seriousness of the situation.

The Council for Educational Advance was founded in 1964 to carry on the work of the highly successful 1963 Campaign for Education, and is essentially a federal body with some 50 affiliated national organisations, including parents' and teachers' organisations, trade unions, religious and educational organisations and all the major political parties. Over the past year the CEA has shown a marked increase in activity, and has accepted the challenge of providing a framework of national organisations for a new kind of campaign against the cuts.

During the summer of 1975 there was a steady build-up of opposition to education cuts, not only among parents' and teachers' organisations, but especially in the broader trade union movement, finding expression in the activities of trades councils and regional TUCs as well as in resolutions passed at the TUC and Labour Party conferences. This development received expression at national level on October 21, when the CEA organised a mass lobby of parliament and a rally for education in the Central Hall, Westminster, which was attended by over 1,500 people and addressed by leading national speakers, including Mrs Marie Patterson, chairman of the TUC Education Committee. On the same afternoon the South East Regional Council of the TUC organised a Hyde Park rally and march to Westminster in which some 10,000 trade unionists and students took part.

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In spite of sedulous efforts by government spokesmen to minimise the effects of cuts, and to suggest that a 'nil growth' situation would not mean a fall in educational standards, it became clear after the Rate Support Grant settlement announced in November 1975 that the central government contributions to education would be reduced, and that the majority of local authorities would be forced to cut education budgets for 1976-77 in ways which would inflict permanent damage on the education service. The Secretary of State for Education, Mr Fred Mulley, expressed open disagreement with his colleague, Mr Anthony Crosland, the Secretary for the Environment, and protested that money voted for education ought to be spent on education, but the damage had already been done in the government's Circular 10/75, a dismal directive which was welcomed with open arms by backward and reactionary local authorities who saw it as providing them with *carte blanche* for cuts.

At this stage the CEA decided that the whole emphasis of the cuts campaign would now move to the local authority level. Special guidelines were prepared for the formation of local Councils for Educational Advance, and local CEAs were set up in Manchester, Brent, Leicester, Gravesham and Brighton before the end of 1975. Other action groups in contact with the CEA were already active in Leeds, Liverpool, Gloucestershire, Bristol, Buckinghamshire and Southampton.

The CEA Executive, which has 20 members, all of whom are in leading positions in their own national organisations, and fully aware of the difficulty and expense of running a national organisation, decided that a flexible and informal structure would be best to link the local groups with the national CEA. Local groups were advised to set up small steering groups in the first instance, with representatives from parents' and teachers' organisations as well as trade unions, in order to arrange a meeting at which a local organisation could be established. At all levels, very simple forms of organisation, bearing in mind the burden of work on local activists, have been the order of the day. Every effort has been made to see that many organisations representing the widest possible cross-section of the working public have been involved. No affiliation fees have been asked from local groups, but they have been asked to undertake the maximum of communication with member organisations and to initiate activity as quickly and as strongly as possible. The cardinal principle of the CEA is that nothing which is done by the collective organisation should ever stand in the way of activity by member organisations. This means that if an individual union or teachers'

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organisation or community group wishes to undertake protest action it is expected to inform the CEA as a whole, and the CEA will be free to help but not to inhibit activity.

By the end of 1975 the CEA Executive was already planning two conferences to be held in the first half of 1976 as part of this campaign. The biggest venture was to be a consultative conference, aimed mainly at general secretaries and leading members of trade unions to be held in London soon after Easter, at which a wide-ranging discussion on policy and activity would be possible, with the aim of securing even greater involvement of the labour movement in this campaign. The other meeting, to be held as early as possible in the year, would bring together representatives of as many of the action groups and local CEAs as possible to discuss what has been learned in the campaign so far. A new pamphlet, *What Price Education?*, was prepared for mass distribution in the course of this campaign.

Nobody, least of all the CEA, can be satisfied with the extremely patchy nature of what has been done so far, both nationally and locally, in this campaign. There is still far too little hard information on the actual cuts which are being proposed—an opacity which the local education authorities have cultivated with loving care. All too often our campaigners have found that, by the time they have found out exactly what the cuts were, it was too late to oppose them effectively. Another lesson we have learnt is that it is no good trying to play off one section of the public service against another, for instance by supporting calls for cuts in administrative costs. We are fortunate in having the National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO) as one of our most active members, to point out the pit-falls of such an approach.

Perhaps the most insidious argument which is used against the campaign, even by some members of the labour movement, is that in a time of national crisis we have a duty to name priorities, both at national level between the education service, the health service, the social services and housing, and within the education service between the various areas of provision, pitting higher education against nursery education, secondary schools against primary schools and so on. We in the Council for Educational Advance argue that this is a false dichotomy. We are not prepared to accept that any civilised society is faced with a choice between the health of its citizens' bodies and the development of their minds. We argue that Britain's only real natural resource is the skill and intelligence of its people, and it is common sense as well as social justice to develop that resource to the full.

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WARMONGERS

Quaestor

AT the beginning of 1976, when most countries are anxiously scanning the horizon for signs of further improvement of international relations, there is one permanent and sinister black cloud in the Far East.

On September 17 last year, talking to Franz-Joseph Strauss (leader of the ultra-right Christian Social Union of West Germany), the Chinese Foreign Minister, Chiao Kuan-hua prophesied 'an all-out attack by the Soviet Union' on Western Europe (*Telegraph* Peking correspondent, September 18, 1975).

On October 6, at a banquet to the Yugoslav Prime Minister, First Deputy Premier Teng Hsiao-ping stated that 'the risk of a third world war has grown,' blaming the Soviet Union as 'the most dangerous source of war today' (AP cable, *Times*, October 7, 1975).

On October 19, at a banquet to US Secretary of State Kissinger, Mr Chiao said: 'The danger of a new world war is mounting' (*Times*, October 20, 1975), while Mao Tse-tung, in a talk with the American statesman, 'stressed the Russian menace' (*Telegraph* Tokyo correspondent, October 24, 1975).

'A senior Chinese minister' expounded to Lord Chalfont in Peking as 'the very foundations of [Chinese] foreign policy' the alleged 'Soviet military threat to the West, the apathy of European politicians and the supreme importance of Nato' (*Times*, October 27, 1975).

At a banquet to West German Chancellor Schmidt, Mr Teng said the Soviet Union was 'posing a threat to the people of Europe and the whole world' (*Times* Peking correspondent, October 30, 1975).

On December 1, when President Ford was in Peking, Mr Teng publicly told him that 'rhetoric about detente cannot cover up the stark reality of the growing danger of war' (*Times* Peking correspondent, December 2, 1975): and, following Ford's talk with Mao, it was confirmed 'that there are serious disagreements over the United States' policy of detente with the Soviet Union' (same correspondent, December 5, 1975).

The Netherlands and the French Foreign Ministers had already received similar admonitions.

Commenting on the struggle of the Angolan People's Republic against United States and South African intervention, 'senior Chinese officials have privately expressed scorn and disappointment at American blindness to Soviet schemes for world domination'—not

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so privately however as to prevent the *Times* receiving the message (December 23, 1975).

'The dark clouds of a new world war are hanging more heavily over the peoples. . . . A violent storm is gathering over the horizon and nothing can stop it. . . . Only the Soviet Union and the United States . . . are the sources of a new world war'—this was the Christmas Day message of the Peking official *People's Daily* (*Telegraph*, December 27, 1975).

Its leading article on January 1 said: 'Soviet social imperialism . . . is precisely the most dangerous source of war today' (*Times*, January 2, 1976).

Never, since the screaming speeches of Hitler and Goebbels in the Nazis' heyday, forty years ago, has there been such a steady torrent of accusations that the USSR is planning world war—though some Tory MPs run them pretty close.

The same parallel is imposed by the Chinese leaders' sneers at all efforts to effect a relaxation of European and world tension.

Detente 'is a clever ploy' of the Soviet Union, Mr Chiao told Strauss (*Telegraph*, September 8), and Kissinger did not realise 'the dangers of detente with the Soviet Union' (*Telegraph*, October 23). The Chinese leaders say that Western countries are deceived by 'the farce of Helsinki' and the 'huge mockery' of strategic arms limitation talks (Lord Chalfont in the *Times* article quoted above). East-West detente is officially regarded by the Chinese as 'a dangerous trick of the Soviet Union' (*Times*, October 30). They warned the Americans 'against being trapped by the so-called detente policy' (*Telegraph*, November 5): and made it clear to President Ford that 'the word detente they consider virtually a term of abuse' (*Times*, December 5). Even twelve American Congresswomen were lectured by Mr Teng on 'the failure of detente' (*Times*, January 3, 1976).

A *Times* leading article commented on December 1: 'Detente with the Soviet Union is an illusion, they say. . . . This argument has been urged upon every Western European visitor, and by almost all of them strongly rejected.' What the paper did not say is that those who did not reject it were such notable friends of peace and understanding as Richard Nixon, F.-J. Strauss and—to judge from his remark that the Chinese picture of most Europeans being 'blissfully unaware of the danger' is 'not without justification'—Lord Chalfont too.

The Chinese leaders' message to the world is thus to reject peaceful relations with the Soviet Union and speed up preparations for war. Such warmongering as theirs has not been heard for nearly two generations.

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Nor is their attitude to every practical proposal in the United Nations for reducing areas of conflict any different. They jeered at the campaign for the Helsinki Conference, and at its decisions, in terms only paralleled in our 'own' Tory press. At the thirtieth UN Assembly which ended on December 17, they opposed the Soviet moves for a treaty prohibiting all nuclear tests, for a convention forbidding warlike measures calculated to injure the natural environment, and for an early World Disarmament Conference. Faced with the overwhelming support of 112 countries for a resolution supporting Soviet proposals to prohibit manufacture of new weapons of mass destruction, the Chinese delegation walked out—joining the fifteen Western capitalist countries who abstained.

No one thinking about the rising campaign in all countries to impose the will of the peoples for peace and disarmament can afford to ignore this unfaltering encouragement given by the Chinese leaders to every means of promoting and provoking war.

WOMEN'S YEAR—WHAT DID IT ACHIEVE?

Pat Turner
National Woman Officer
General and Municipal Workers' Union

IT is easy to be sceptical about the effects of International Women's Year: to write it off as a mere ritual gesture which scarcely rippled the water let alone rocked the boat.

But was it so unproductive? Its prime purpose, as designated by the United Nations who originated it, was to direct attention to the status of women in society in order to stimulate the kind of changes —social, political, economic and educational—which would end sex discrimination and enable women to participate fully in the total social system, national and international.

In Britain, whatever else International Women's Year has achieved, it undoubtedly helped to focus attention on the status of women in our society. The case for change was put and supported by a weight of factual evidence and conviction that cannot be dismissed.

The British trade union movement has been totally committed to this endeavour. Throughout 1975, we have seen a mass of activities up and down the country including public meetings, conferences, marches, demonstrations and rallies, organised by the TUC, by

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trades councils and by individual unions. The issue of sex discrimination in employment was debated at the 1975 TUC conference and at annual conferences of most major unions. It has been discussed in union journals and on union training courses. Some unions set up 'equal rights working parties', and others produced special policy documents, spelling out union objectives for achieving equality at work. And the year culminated with the establishment, by the TUC General Council, of an Equal Rights Committee. It is unlikely that this level of sustained activity and commitment would have been achieved without the incentive of International Women's Year.

But International Women's Year has also seen a breakthrough for women in the field of legislation. The Equal Pay Act became enforceable on December 29, 1975, together with the new Sex Discrimination Act. The Equal Opportunities Commission was set up as part of the monitoring and enforcement machinery of the legislation, and with the overall task of working towards the removal of sex discrimination in all parts of society.

In addition, two other pieces of legislation had a direct bearing on the position of women. The Social Security Pensions Act establishes the right of women to equal treatment, whilst the Protection of Employment Act goes some way to recognising maternity as a social function and not a disability, in the provision for paid maternity leave.

Of course, International Women's Year has not produced miracles. It will not change, overnight, conventional wisdom about the role and position of women. But, in retrospect, I think it will be seen as a year of triumph for women's rights in Britain, not least because, for the first time, some of them have been enshrined in law.

Equally, it will be seen as a year when working class women became increasingly aware and prepared to struggle for their rights at all levels, and a year in which more and more men recognised the justice of their fight and joined it themselves. An example of this can be seen in the many successful equal pay strikes during 1975, when men and women shared the picket line to the advantage of both.

The struggle however is by no means over. There are many areas of social life in which women still face discrimination or must continue to carry unequal burdens. The fight for equal pay is by no means won. The Sex Discrimination Act, welcome though it is, has weaknesses, not least in its enforcement procedure. And if there has been some positive shift in social attitudes towards women, it would be naïve to place too much reliance on either the extent or depth of the change. The very real stress and misery generated for workers

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due to the present level of unemployment is showing only too clearly the frailty of women's 'right to work', despite the verbal support given to the concept.

Nevertheless, women *do* now have positive rights in law particularly in the field of employment. The social climate *is* changing, albeit slowly. But it is up to us, as trade unionists, to ensure the exercise of women's new rights: to translate the spirit of the law into actual behaviour. Legislation is not a substitute for collective bargaining. This much we have learned from the Equal Pay Act. For most working women, equal opportunity—like equal pay—will be achieved only by collective action at workplace level: by shop stewards negotiating the kind of agreements which will ensure equality of treatment for *all* workers, in recruitment, job access, training and promotion opportunities and in job security.

And in this, women workers have to play their part. International Women's Year showed a large increase in trade union membership amongst women—some 170,000 over 1974, providing a total membership of $2\frac{3}{4}$ million—26.8 per cent of total TUC membership. But that still leaves over six million unorganised women workers—a challenge to all of us.

It is not, of course, sufficient for women just to join trade unions. They need to be active participants, particularly at workplace level, where so much of the new legislation will be implemented. Women have to be willing to come forward and take their place on workplace negotiating committees, prepared—where necessary—to challenge collective prejudice and discriminatory practices.

There is another dimension which should not be overlooked. It has created an awareness, particularly amongst women trade unionists in Western industrialised countries, that in spite of national and cultural differences, the problems facing women workers are remarkably similar. And this is not only in achieving equality of status in the employment relationship, but in the strains arising from the home/work conflict.

Equally important has been the developing awareness amongst women workers in advanced industrialised societies of the problems of our sisters in third-world countries, which differ not only in degree but in kind. That whilst we in Britain are pressing for access to positions of power and influence, in a highly developed technological society, millions of women and their children are still struggling for very survival.

The World Plan of Action which emerged from the United Nations International Women's Year Conference in Mexico City, endorsed

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by 131 participating countries, clearly identified the major problems facing women everywhere, and makes specific recommendations for solving them. In this sense, the World Plan of Action provides women with an unprecedented political weapon for forcing governments into action programmes on committed objectives, relevant to their situation.

For all these reasons, International Women's Year has been worth while. If we fail to capitalise on the momentum generated, we really have only ourselves to blame.

TRADE UNION EDUCATION

Jim Fyrth
Senior Staff Tutor
London University Extra-Mural Department

IN the August 1975 *Labour Monthly*, Jock Shanley reviewed the first five books in the Trade Union Industrial Studies series published by Arrow Books in co-operation with the Society of Industrial Tutors. His criticism was severe and contained a number of statements about trade union education with which I wish to deal as one of the editorial committee responsible for these books and one closely involved with the education which he criticises (and as a reader of *LM* for forty years).

His article condemned all trade union education since the National Council of Labour Colleges (NCLC) and especially day-release courses which are held for shop stewards. Such education, he seemed to think, is '*élit*ist towards the working class . . . and subservient to bourgeois ideas,' and based on a theory of resolving conflicts 'without fundamental change'. This is what the NCLC said about the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), Ruskin College, and 'university persons' in the twenties and thirties.

Criticism of current trade union education must be based on what is actually happening at the present time. To speak from knowledge, I and my colleagues in the London University Extra-Mural Department and the London WEA have, over the past ten years, taken day- or half-day-release courses for workplace representatives in the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, in the National Union of Railwaymen, from London Transport, local government, print, furniture, Fords, engineering, the docks and other places. Some of these have been in co-operation with the TUC, rather more with individual unions and shop stewards' committees.

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In all cases unions or union representatives have *negotiated* day-release for education as an additional trade union *right*. The syllabuses are worked out by discussion between students and tutors, and classes are conducted with intense participation of the students themselves, and with their trade union officers. The fact that leave is paid by the employer no more compromises stewards' independence than does the fact that they are paid by their employer while performing their union duties.

As an example of a syllabus, a current class with ASLEF members includes study of railway negotiating machinery, machinery for dealing with disciplinary cases and accident claims, basic skills of note-taking, report-making, moving resolutions, meeting procedure, preparing and presenting a case, using figures and where to look for information. But it deals also with the aims and organisation of British trade unions, trades councils, the TUC, the Labour Party, trade union history, trade unions and the law, the law of picketing, unfair dismissal, industrial democracy, government pay policy, socialism, unemployment and inflation, the multinationals, reading company accounts, international finance and the City. These, I emphasise, were topics decided on by the students themselves for a 24-day course.

The same is true of other centres, for instance the Sheffield Extra-Mural Department works with miners, steel workers and others. It is difficult to imagine that the Yorkshire miners would go on supporting work that was not genuine working class education directed to the needs of trade union activists.

The criticism which Jock Shanley's article levelled at such education would not stand up to the test of discussion with the many shop stewards and trade union officials with whom we have worked. He argues that 'independent working class education' was 'killed off' when the TUC took over the role of the NCLC, he suggests, on the initiative of George Woodcock.

In fact the 1947 TUC passed a resolution, moved by the National Union of Mineworkers with left-wing support, calling on the TUC to take over the functions of the NCLC and Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee. Negotiations went on until the sixties, during which time neither the NCLC nor the WETUC could claim great advances in trade union education. The NCLC in the post-war era was moribund. The flame of the Central Labour College was long extinguished. Apart from correspondence courses and talks to trade union branches and some one-day schools, it touched few trade unionists. *Plebs* was a vehicle for the most right-wing Labour

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views, and such Marxism as survived in the NCLC's work was arid and academic or the sectarian variety of the British Section of the Fourth International.

However, during those years there was a considerable growth of education run directly by individual unions. Many ran day and weekend schools, national schools and summer schools (six weeks, in the case of the Transport and General Workers' Union). The Electrical Trades Union set up its own college and has since been followed by the National Union of General and Municipal Workers and the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs. Wortley Hall was created as an educational centre in Yorkshire. At the same time a considerable number of full-time tutors were appointed by the WEA and university extra-mural departments to do the type of work described above.

The ten years since the TUC began its work have seen an enormous growth. The number of TUC day-release (ten week) students grew from 2,263 in 1967 to 7,627 in 1972, and this rate of growth has been at least maintained. More recently trade union pressure has succeeded in inserting, into the Employment Protection Bill, Clause 50 which defines the right of trade union officers to release for educational purposes. The important thing about much of this education is that it is to a high degree subject to shop-floor control.

It is against this background that the books reviewed in the August *Labour Monthly* must be seen. There will eventually be twelve of these books with three longer 'resource books' of essays, reading and study suggestions. Besides the themes of using statistics, mastering maths, how to study, run meetings and deal with the media, the role of stewards, the organisation of the British workers, etc, in those published, future topics will include understanding company accounts, union rule books, the law on picketing, workers' rights, payments systems, women in trade unions, the unions and the government, and others. These topics were not chosen to keep information about the whole 'economic and political system' away from students, but because there are not books on these topics, cheap, easy of access and written directly for trade union activists, whereas there are books on the economic and political system. We knew from experience that there was a need and have tried to meet it.

It is indeed vital that the labour movement should be both vigilant and critical of this growing trade union education, for what takes place varies greatly in quality and reflects every shade of outlook to be found in the labour movement. With such rapid growth there is a special problem of sufficient tutors committed to trade union aims.

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I would argue that the TUC courses can be criticised on both educational and socialist grounds. Educationally, a ten-day course is not enough. Trade union education, like any other, requires continuous study. Neither does the TUC give sufficient opportunity to shop stewards to control the syllabus. It relies on a set syllabus which concentrates too heavily on the immediate training problems of stewards. It is true that this is precisely what trade union students ask for when they come to courses, and they often have to be persuaded to look at 'society as a whole'. The TUC argues that there are some 350,000 shop stewards and that to give all of them a short training course would take years. But 'how to do the job' cannot be separated from 'why the job needs doing', and the best activists are usually those who know the history and aims of the movement. Even the shortest course can involve students in discussion of fundamentals.

There is also certainly need for an organisation dedicated to socialist education. This question is not to be confused with that of trade union education, though the two are connected. Meanwhile, those of us who are deeply concerned with education for emancipation would like to see more discussion of what this means and how it can best be done in the labour movement, but hope that discussion can be constructive.

CORNISH NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Royston Green

THE history of the Cornish people begins with Dumnonia, which archaeology indicates as possibly existing in pre-Roman times. The Cornish had their age of saints and heroes in the fifth and sixth centuries. After the slow demolition of Dumnonia, Cornwall was twice conquered by the West Saxons in 838 and 925 or 936, the last two dates being ambiguously chronicled. Athelstan fixed the boundary substantially along the Tamar river, and for over a millenium it has disguised as an English county the ethnic fact of England's oldest colony.

The political importance of this unassimilated people may have been recognised by the formalisation of immemorial Celtic jurisdictions and by various charters, such as that of King John in 1204, so that the tinners were given the enfranchisement by which they

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elected 24 Stannators to form the Stannary parliament to deal with matters of law for tinners, except those of land, life and limb. More dubiously, such recognition may also be seen in the location in Cornwall of the first Royal Duchy in 1337. The Duchy of Cornwall received the product of coinage, the tax of a piece of tin cut from each smelted block, a practice which may have reinforced Cornish consciousness of being a conquered nation. The Duchy is still an unloved institution. It yields annually £200,000 to Prince Charles.

Medieval charters and European society recognised 'Anglia et Cornubia'. The last written affirmation in the old style was Hopton's reference, in 1616, to 'three great provinces or countries' of England, Wales and Cornwall, each with its own language.

Growth of capitalist elements in tin-mining and agriculture in the sixteenth century, and prohibition of the Bible and prayer book in Kernewek (the Cornish language), substantially modified Cornish identity. The people rallied to King Charles to keep out an *English* army. After the Restoration, they were swept into commercial and industrial development. The miners and fishermen of the west obstinately used Kernewek at work till well on in the eighteenth century.

To tin, ever the bread and butter of Cornish mining, was added copper about 1700, then lead, iron, arsenic, antimony, zinc, tungsten and some silver. There were many gifted engineers and technological intelligentsia: Cornwall was one of the important cradles of the industrial revolution. Till the 1840s she produced half the world's copper. The Stannary parliament may well not have been called in order to deny a voice to interests disliked by the dominating capitalists, but the Westminster parliament passed Acts in 1836, 1855 and 1896 affecting Cornish industry.

The copper kingdom crashed in 1866, and other metal production jerked down to near extinction by the 1920s. Working class emigration massively increased, and there were special sailings from Cornish ports. The threadbearing of the economic infra-structure is illustrated by one single stream which, once powering forty enterprises along its six miles to tidewater at Perran-at-Worthal, is now deserted. Two main engineering survivals are the mining machinery factory (Compair) at Camborne and Falmouth dry dock (P & O), now employing far fewer than the 2,500 and 1,600 workers respectively in the 1960s. The population peak of 369,390 in 1861 had gone down nearly to 345,000 in 1961, though it is now estimated at 396,000.

In this century there was intensified cultural self-study and an

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expanding exploration of history. The last people with authentic fragments of Kernewek helped those who rebuilt the language from books after 1850. Cornwall joined the Celtic Congress in 1904, thereby associating with the five sister peoples who reflect her existence in their languages and histories. In 1928, scholars of the Cornish language and Cornish culture, founded Gorseth Kernow, a society which admits those who have helped Cornish culture and tries to provide cultural advance by remaining a devoted community or college of bards.

The young and the skilled continued the emigration. Cornwall never had full employment, and unemployment always exceeds the average for Britain (it was 11 per cent in December 1975). Job choice was always restricted. Pay has been recently estimated to be 17 per cent below the UK average.

After the second world war capitalism had turned its back on so mildly profitable an area, except marginally with regard to cheap, especially female, labour. Mebyon Kernow (Sons of Cornwall) was founded in 1951, mainly by language bards who were distressed at the social-economic condition of Cornwall and dissatisfied with the achievement of cultural nationalism alone. It remains the only long-standing organisation of political nationalism in Cornwall. Its aim of self-government has never been defined. It admires the constitutions of the Isle of Man and Channel Islands, as well as the Plaid Cymru and Scottish National Party. It has many members whose interests would be served by socialism, but these interests have never become identified with socialism in the backward political development of Cornwall. It has campaigned for more industry, maintenance and improvement of all forms of transport, control of Cornwall's water supplies, a Cornish university, more effective control of health, a single Cornish administration excluding encroachment by Devon County and by Plymouth, better school provision, an educational content inclusive of the Cornish heritage. In the sixties, MK membership grew from under 100 to over 2,000.

Trade unions are represented in Cornwall by the AUEW (engineers), TGWU (transport workers), GMWU (general workers), NUAAW (agricultural workers), NUM (miners), NUR (railwaymen) and various organisations of workers in services. There are five trades councils. In the last general election the Labour Party obtained just under 47,000 votes, 20 per cent of the poll. The Communist Party has never exceeded sixty members, but has put up a candidate once for each of Padstow and Redruth in local elections, obtaining respectively 106 and 113 votes. Non-unionism is widespread outside

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those occupations—not plentiful in Cornwall—associated with the larger unions.

Thus the history of Cornwall brings into the modern world a community which regards itself as distinct in British conditions, but which suffers from considerable difficulties in the creation of forms suitable for its survival. It has been offered neither recognition nor opposition by any part of organised labour. Consequently, Cornish people looking for a political form for their Cornish consciousness have had to choose either disappearance or an organisation inspired by a bourgeois national ideology. Central Cornwall is an area with good examples of this situation.

Within its limits is the home base of a powerful monopoly which has been very successful in projecting the idea of class collaboration among its large body of workers. There is strong representation of the middle class in that, for example, (1) there is an important part of the catering activity which, in 1974, had visitors bringing an estimated £102 million to Cornwall as a whole; (2) there are many self-employed people, with new organisations. In addition to MK, there are two new nationalist organisations: (1) the Stannary parliament (which is nationalist because elected Stannators are nationalists), and (2) the Cornish Nationalist Party. All three nationalist organisations show unmistakable signs of seeking support from the middle class, with the workers subordinated to monopoly, splintered through the catering trade and generally ill-organised in other fields. Details of the economic and political situation are as follows.

English China Clays (ECC) is a £60 million multinational monopoly with a recent pre-tax profit of nearly £20 million, or between £2,000 and £3,000 per worker. It has already 'diversified' into construction and video cassettes. ECC employs 35 per cent of the labour force of the St Austell area (about 7,000 workers). The vast holes it has made, under county planning permission, have reduced many settlements to what planners call 'island villages'. Public resistance to ECC's spoliation of about 40 square miles of land has resulted in the devil turning monk with plans to landscape parts of the wrecked scene.

In 1969, ECC made productivity agreements which knit trade unions into administration. These agreements did not prevent the creation of 835 redundancies in 1971. A shop steward wrote to the local press to praise the joint efforts of company and unions in doing 'this distasteful operation'. In 1972, the company chairman, Lord Abercrombie, rubbed in salt by saying that the country did not owe everyone a living. Soon afterwards the subordination of the workers'

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outlook to their employers was demonstrated in the 1972 dock strike, when 6,000 clay workers marched through St Austell, with the managing director and some other directors, against the dock workers in the ECC's port of Par. In 1973 and 1974, the company got successively Victor Feather and Jack Jones to come down and praise it. The managing director expressed a 'family relationship' industrial theory in a 1975 Lenten lecture in Truro cathedral.

In 1974, the Stannary parliament was recreated for the first time since 1752, and a number of Stannators who form the parliament were elected in St Austell. Many of them were workers. It appears that somebody realised that a constitutional basis still existed for the parliament, and the conditions of Cornwall made a considerable body of people look upon it as a ready-made prototype of self-government. Its Clerk made an abortive attempt to arrest an officer of the magistrate's court, trying him for a motoring offence, in one of several bizarre demonstrations of rival authority. They issued notes in denominations of 5s, 10s, £1 and £5, without the portrait of the Queen but with a promise to pay, printed in Kernewek, with the same in English on the back; the value was backed by people who volunteered to buy them, and some shops accepted them. Some of the Stannators unsuccessfully stood for office in MK in a vain attempt to take over the leadership.

The new National Federation of the Self-Employed has 1,200 members in Cornwall; and at Wadebridge, not far away from Padstow, a meeting attended by hundreds announced their refusal to pay the government levy of 8 per cent on their earnings. The Stannators supported them, though the self-employed were lukewarm about this support. The Cornwall Federation of Chambers of Commerce has said that 20 per cent of small private businesses are up for sale, and another 20 per cent had been running at a loss for twelve months (*Western Morning News*, November 20, 1974).

Where MK seeks votes is indicated in a letter (*Western Morning News*, October 17, 1974) from one who has assisted in editing its journal: 'The size of Mr Penhaligon's majority [for the Liberal Party] was almost identical to the number of votes lost in the [Truro] constituency by the Mebyon Kernow candidate . . . [the voters] deciding to oust the Tories by voting Liberal.' In the neighbouring constituency of Falmouth and Camborne, MK supported a tried nationalist who functions in the Liberal Party, and the secretary of MK (once a Liberal) explained this *as a way of obtaining the vote of radicals in a community in which*, he claimed, *socialism could not flourish* (*Carn*, Winter 1974-75, journal of the Celtic League). This

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constituency is the only one in living memory which has had a Labour MP, but it was lost in 1970 by Dr Dunwoody, who quite blatantly ignored the existence of the 'Cornish' vote.

Surely these circumstances contain a double lesson. Firstly, labour organisation can and must be strengthened in Cornwall. The biggest reservoir of Cornish consciousness is unmistakably the working class. Secondly, the Cornish need to hear that a strong socialist and labour movement will support their identity, reconcile differences with the non-Cornish and straighten out the capitalist distortions of economy and society.

BOOKS

Marxism and the Theory of Praxis
John Hoffman
Lawrence & Wishart, 240 pp, £4

THE 'THEORY OF PRAXIS' is an attempt made by various twentieth-century writers—starting with Lukács—to turn Marx's remarks on the significance of revolutionary practice as opposed to 'theoretical' speculation into a wholesale assault on Marx's own theoretical position. Just as they translated the word 'practice' to 'praxis', they translated the rest of Marx into Greek, they mystified him and made their enterprise sound exceptionally deep by adopting a mass of obscure terminology. John Hoffman has done a great service to Marxists by translating these people's work back into 'English' and reducing it to five essential anti-Marxist propositions: 1. That Marxism is not a philosophy; 2. That dialectics cannot exist in nature; 3. That consciousness cannot 'reflect' reality; 4. That the basis/superstructure analysis is a false one; and 5. That determinism contradicts human freedom. The book starts with a full-scale defence of the Marxist position on each of these points.

A further chapter deals with attempts to justify praxis theory by appealing to the early Marx. This is an old debate, and it would not be possible in one chapter even to outline the arguments, let alone add anything new. Hoffman restricts himself to demonstrating that the elements of Marx's thought that give most support to the above five propositions are just those that Marx abandoned between 1843 and 1845, whereas the new positions that he adopted in this period already bore the stamp of what praxis theory would dismiss as 'orthodox Marxism'. There is rather too much emphasis on Feuerbach and too little discussion of Hegel in this reviewer's opinion but the essential case is proved.

Finally, there is a discussion of the political implications of praxis theory which demonstrates how theoretically anti-Marxist views lead to reactionary positions—'Utopianism in theory and conservatism in practice'—in particular to an attack on the need for a working class party organisation.

If the book has a failing it is the lack of some kind of treatment of the development and anatomy of the praxis school. We are plunged into the generalities of theoretical battle before we have any inkling of the identity of the enemy. At the very least a set of thumb-nail biographies

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would have been useful. But the book is nevertheless a vital one, both for the specialist as a major analysis of an important philosophical school and for the general reader as an exposition and defence of fundamental Marxist positions.

TONY DODD

Big Business: Theoretical and Empirical Aspects of Concentration and Mergers in the United Kingdom
Sam Aaronovitch and Malcolm C. Sawyer

Macmillan, 338 pp, £10

ACADEMIC ECONOMICS has for long puzzled over the high and ever-rising levels of industrial concentration which mark all advanced capitalist countries, and the capitalist world as a whole. In this work, Aaronovitch and Sawyer offer a detailed critique of orthodox analysis, which they confront with the Marxist theory of capitalist accumulation, as applied to contemporary conditions. The focus of their work is an attempt to account for the merger boom in post-second world war Britain, which has now produced a situation where half of all employment in UK manufacturing industry is in the hands of 200 giant corporations.

Orthodox views on concentration and monopoly can be divided into two broad schools, traditional and 'managerial'.

The traditionalist or 'neo-classical' school remains bemused by a view of a harmonious and efficient capitalism, where 'free' markets dictate the price at which firms can sell, and competition ensures that the 'sovereign' consumer receives goods at the lowest possible cost. To these apologists for 'free enterprise', monopoly is a disturbing aberration, a more or less serious departure from the competitive norm. The only difficulty with such a theory is that there is no reality to which it corresponds; and any relevance which the idea of 'perfect' competition may once have had disappears under modern circumstances where the typical industry is dominated by two or three giants. This has not prevented a voluminous literature which uses every conceivable type of technical sophistry to match a competitive square to the monopolistic circle.

The second or 'managerial' theory of the modern firm at least has the merit of recognising some of the salient realities of the present day economic structure: the growth of the large national and multinational corporations; the existence of all sorts of wasteful forms of competition which raise, rather than lower, prices; the complex internal structure of the modern firm and the power struggles which go on within it. What these theorists claim, however, is that the modern economy has ceased to be capitalist: its driving force is no longer self-expanding value and the pursuit of profit. The myth of 'perfect competition' is replaced by that of the 'soulful corporation', of public spirited 'planning' by private interest groups and so on—myths which have not been without influence on the leaderships of post-war labour movements.

To these theories, often presented with the most 'scientific' of forms, with a mass of technicalities concealing their ideological content, Aaronovitch and Sawyer counterpose a Marxist view of the capitalist enterprise, which sees the concentration of capital as an outcome of competitive accumulation. Monopoly in this view is neither an aberration from, nor the abolition of, capitalist competition but its logical consequence, as large capitals suppress and subordinate their weaker rivals only to come into rivalry with other giants.

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Nor is there anything necessarily efficient or beneficial about this rivalry which is not a matter of simple price competition but a quite general struggle for growth and survival. On the contrary the industrial pattern generated may, as the authors show, be quite irrational, with enterprises too small or too large for efficient production, here over-centralised, there with damaging fragmentation and rivalry.

Big Business will prove a useful work for anyone studying industrial structure and an invaluable guide through the labyrinths of the academic economic journals to which all of us must at times have recourse for analytical and factual detail.

JOHN GRAHL

Keir Hardie
Iain McLean
Allen Lane, 184 pp, £2.75

THE AUTHOR appears to have done considerable research but with somewhat uneven results. There emerges a fairly clearly defined picture of Keir Hardie, starting from his birth in Legbrannock, Lanarkshire, on August 15, 1856, till his last illness in Cumnock, Ayrshire, and his death in a Glasgow nursing home on September 26, 1915. Following his early experiences as a miner, his development as a local mines official and his growing political awareness, the author traces his life with its almost continuous battles.

Unceasing struggles on two major things run like a thread through his life. First the problem of unemployment. His first speech in parliament in 1893 was made moving an amendment to the address on the Queen's speech. His theme was unemployment. The other main issue was his unflagging efforts to get the eight-hour day for the miners. In speeches and at meetings of all kinds he pressed the demand.

Hardie's major political achievements are dealt with, particularly the decisive part he played in the formation of the Independent Labour Party. Then later, even more importantly, the formation of the Labour Party. Tribute is paid to his great courage, shown in the fight against the Boer War, and for him the harder battle when he was already a sick man against the 1914-18 world war.

His republicanism and courageous criticism of the royal family are clearly depicted. Iain McLean stresses Hardie's individualism and opines that he was a 'loner'. He also argues strongly, producing evidence, that Hardie was a very vain man.

Where, I think, McLean's bias affects his judgement is in his attitude to Marxism. He takes great pains to stress that, despite his correspondence with Frederick Engels, Hardie was not and never would be a Marxist.

At the 1894 TUC, Hardie moved his famous amendment demanding the nationalisation of the 'whole of production, distribution and exchange'. This was carried by 219 votes to 61. Broadhurst turned and said: 'Hardie, this is the most significant vote ever recorded at this Congress.' McLean's comment is (p 60): 'Of course it was nothing of the sort. The Parliamentary Committee had no intention of taking any steps in favour of nationalisation.'

The author's opposition to the Social-Democratic Federation and Marxism appears almost splenetic at times. I quote from page 141: 'A few malcontents in the ILP left and joined forces with Hyndman's SDF to form the British Socialist Party

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in 1912; but it never looked like having any substantial working class support, a position which was little changed when it joined with other fringe groups to form the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1920.'

On page 160: 'Russia had had a socialist revolution, but not of a sort that Keir Hardie would have welcomed for very long.' In the index the names of about 150 people appear: there is no mention there or in the book of John Maclean, whose period of most intense political activity in Scotland, Ireland and occasionally in England, extended from 1900 till his tragic death in 1923. John Maclean was a Marxist.

PETER KERRIGAN

Civil Liberties in Britain
Barry Cox
Penguin, 336 pp, 90p

A HISTORY of the National Council for Civil Liberties since its foundation by Ronald Kidd, Henry Nevinson and others in 1934, was badly needed. The gap has been filled by Barry Cox, who has written a most useful volume. Not a little of its utility lies in the manner in which he gives references and thus enables his story to be checked in detail. Names such as D. N. Pritt QC occur in the earlier campaigns. During 40 years of campaigning, NCCL has taken up many causes ranging from questions of political moment, such as those surrounding freedom of expression or the activities of the police, to matters concerning oppressed minorities or the conducting of mental hospitals. It would certainly be untrue to say that its work has not been of considerable value to advanced groups generally.

One of the difficulties surrounding work of this kind is that the constitution of the country is not libertarian. As a result, an impression is created at times that NCCL is a somewhat anarchist body performing the functions of a permanent opposition. For example, a struggle for freedom of expression must be balanced by the fact that the common law of England knows nothing of any absolute right to freedom of speech. Difficulties come to be faced when the concept of freedom is regarded as an absolute. Arguments are put forward, such as those emanating nowadays from Conway Hall, which would urge that freedom of speech demands the letting of halls to the National Front! For the Marxist, freedom within society is a relative concept and is to be measured by the security of the proletarian state. For example, faced by the forces of counter-revolution, the USSR is in no position to allow the spread of counter-revolutionary propaganda within its own borders. The whole security of its socialist revolution would be put at stake.

It is questions such as these which must be balanced when problems of minority freedom come to be examined by NCCL. As a result, socialists will find themselves in a position of supporting some issues and not others. The NCCL has done yeoman service on behalf of arrested or accused persons. It was a pioneer in demanding far better conditions when dealing with the mentally afflicted. But one may be a left-winger to the full and yet be very uncertain of some of the statements which have emanated from NCCL over Northern Ireland. Withdrawal of British troops raises various difficult problems of technique and manner. It is necessary to use a very long spoon indeed when supping with Orange trade unionists. Again,

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one need not be a reactionary to feel somewhat uncertain about the results which would follow if schools at large adopted the full policies put out at one time by the NCCL, in the name of the rights of school children. There are enough problems in schools already without adding to the burdens which could be laid upon the conscientious teacher. In short, issues must be balanced and care must be taken before rushing into any and every campaign which may reflect libertarian concepts.

F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT

Mass Communication—or Mass Deception
Tony Emerson
Key Issue Publications, 18 pp, 17p

IN SEPTEMBER 1973, an issue of the *Daily Express* devoted 75 column inches to Mark Phillips's wedding trousers. Their report, a few days later, of a leakage of radioactivity at a Cumberland nuclear power station in which 40 workers were contaminated, received two column inches.

In this pamphlet, Tony Emerson provides in a readable style a number of examples of the sort of 'truth' which the 'free' press peddles. He points out that the media determine the importance to be attached to issues by the prominence which they give them. The net result is that the media give more coverage to the topics which are 'convenient' to business interests and the existing social order, than to issues which are 'inconvenient'.

He attempts to quantify this by analysing the newspapers, radio and TV over an eight-week period. The coverage given to certain specified topics has been measured in column inches (for the press), and in seconds (for the radio and TV).

Coverage of crime which harmed the person (e.g. murder, hijacking, drug-pushing) was so extensive that it could not be fitted into the graphs with which the pamphlet is illustrated. Less than a quarter such coverage was received by industrial injuries (which cause 3,000 deaths annually), motor accidents (8,000 deaths) and illnesses caused by smoking (100,000 deaths).

Similarly, much more prominence was given to loss of production through strikes, than to loss through unemployment, sickness and absenteeism and industrial injuries (approximate millions of man-days lost, in the year in question: 10, 150, 300 and 25, respectively).

And the amount of space devoted to such awkward topics as inequality, tax avoidance, military expenditure and the trend to monopoly is, the pamphlet shows, negligible—particularly when compared with a safe topic such as royalty.

JOHN SPRACK

The Helsinki Agreements
Gordon Schaffer
British Committee for European Security and Co-operation, 8 pp, 15p

IT IS A DISGRACE—but unfortunately typical—that the Labour government considered its pledge at Helsinki to publish the latter's 35-state Final Act fulfilled when it brought out a costly White Paper in a few thousand copies. As for the capitalist press and the BBC, they published practically nothing except a series of malicious attacks or insinuations. Gordon Schaffer here prints a useful summary of the Agreements for the use of ordinary people who have not had access to (for example) the full text available in English as a supplement to *Moscow News*.

A. R.

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Power, Violence, Decision
W. J. M. Mackenzie
Penguin, 272 pp, £2.25

ONE WOULD EXPECT a book with so striking a title to give some political insight into the process of social and revolutionary change. Any reader who expects this will be bitterly disappointed, for it fails to bring out clearly the basic reasons for violence, for conscious decisions and the struggle for power.

The preface points out that the book has three guiding principles. First, that politics is both necessary and dangerous. Second, that politics is an autonomous form of human action. Third, that political words are an integral part of political action. What follows in the book is mainly a play upon words, with no basic explanation of what gives rise to political action.

Marx and Engels laid bare the class divisions in modern society, the basic factor in the revolutionary process to change social formations. The author seems ignorant of this. Why? 'It was difficult to make contact with Marx,' and 'partly this was because there was no Marxist scholarship to speak of.' This at a time when Marxism cannot be excluded from any university!

The author admits it 'may seem disrespectful to allocate here only twenty pages to Marxism directly,' but explains that 'the whole book is about Marxism indirectly.' Seldom has there been such a travesty of the truth.

Moreover, the book is badly written. Its language is extremely difficult. There are endless quotations from random authors (over 400 books are listed at the end), and if the author has read some of them it might explain his confusion!

IDRIS COX

Fireweed
Writers & Readers Publishing Co-operative, 62 pp, 60p

A PROFUSELY illustrated magazine of working class and socialist arts, masterminded by the Lancashire University duo, David Craig and Nigel Gray, contains work by Neruda, Brecht, Rosselson and David Craig himself, as well as 'new' poets and writers. Poetry, short stories, drama, artwork and music. Well worth immediate investigation by all left wing readers and writers.

KEN GEERING

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Max Weber and Value-Free Sociology: A Marxist Critique, John Lewis. Lawrence & Wishart, 192 pp, £2.

Economic Planning and Politics in Britain, Jacques Leruez. Martin Robertson, 324 pp, £8.25.

The Road to 1945: British Politics and the Second World War, Paul Addison. Jonathan Cape, 334 pp, £6.50.

Prostitutes, Jeremy Sandford. Secker & Warburg, 228 pp, £4.50.

Pyramids of Sacrifice: Political Ethics and Social Change, Peter L. Berger. Allen Lane, 272 pp, £5.50.

Socialism: The Active Utopia, Zygmunt Bauman. Allen & Unwin, 150 pp, £4.95.

Mass Communication—or Mass Deception, Tony Emerson. Key Issue Publications, 18 pp, 17p.

Soviet Trade Unions and the General Strike, Ernie Trory. Crabtree Press, 48 pp, 35p.

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WELL MANAGED

'WE had some complaints this month ... yes, actually, complaints! Readers found there was a famine of *Labour Monthly* in some parts by the end of the first week. Anyone who has not yet succeeded in getting a copy and needs it for his file, should write to The Manager, 134 Ballards Lane, N3, as some may be still available. And the moral is *order early* from bookshops and newsagents. It is not always easy for them to estimate their demand. A little consideration for them makes their job—and ours—easier, and silences the readers' laments.'

That quote from our June 1948 is chosen for two reasons: (1) because it fits our present case, our January 1976 issue having run into similar 'demand trouble'—our then Manager's appeal is perfectly apt today; and (2) because the writer was Angela Tuckett, and that appears to be the first of the many pieces signed by her in which readers' letters were given their place in the great effort to increase *LM*'s circulation and fund-raising activities to which her abilities were energetically directed.

While our January 1976 issue was again crashing the sell-out barrier, Angela was celebrating her 70th birthday, having just helped to mark International Women's Year at a meeting in Aberdare. The *Aberdare Leader*, December 12, carried 37 column inches plus a beaming headline, 'Women Solicitor Who Wanted To Become An Engine Driver', reporting that Angela Tuckett, of Swindon, 'solicitor, journalist, author, poet, and legal adviser to the National Council for Civil Liberties, gave a fine lecture on "The Position of Women in Society".'

Many of *LM*'s readers will remember Angela's equally fine work for the journal and will join in wishing her and her husband Ike Gradwell many years more 'in the struggle for the liberation of mankind'. Angela will be among those taking careful account of our current efforts in the circulation and fund-raising fields in which she still has an active part as a member of *LM*'s Business Committee. Our December fund total (opposite) came within a hair's breadth of

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our £120 target. We need to take it over that target every month to ensure that ends meet in our 1976 budget.

Among those new readers introduced to our journal in January's splendid sales effort, who will be using *LM* in their trade union work month by month, can we ask for consideration to be given to our need for regular donations from individuals and organisations? Join those to whom the thanks of all are due in the continuing campaign and involvement of our journal in the labour movement.

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